

Lake Miltona



FALL
News
December 2025

lake-miltona.org

Volume 1, No. 19

Directors and Officers are listed below. Please thank them for volunteering their time for the Lake Miltona Community.

OFFICERS:

President:	Steve DeSutter
Vice President:	Shannon Burgad
Treasurer:	Chad Koebnick
Secretary:	Janet Guinn

DIRECTORS:

Mark Niedenfuer	Area 1
John Fair	Area 2A
Janet Zastrow	Area 2B
John Fay	Area 2C
Jeff Anderson	Area 3A
Vern Suhr	Area 3B
Gene Rose	Area 3C
Steve Herth	Area 4
Heath Hinsch	Area 5

DIRECTORS *continued*:

Shannon Burgad	Area 6
Mark Jacobs	Area 7
Janet Guinn, Gary Fuchs	Area 8
Jay Sieling	Area 9
Jay Sieling	Area 10
Open	Area 11
Mike Wrobel	Area 12
Ted Boehne, Tom & Cheryl Brauer	Area 13
Tom Struthers	Area 14
Brad Roberts	Area 15
Steve Labatt	Area 16
Steve DeSutter, Chad Koebnick, Tim Kaatz	Area 17
Randy Hansen	Area 18
Don Henning	Area 19



A Message from the President

Lake Miltona enjoyed quite a bit of summer rain to help maintain a decent water level through the summer. The rain has slowed down this fall and as we look to freeze up, the lake levels seem low. Could use some winter moisture to help with water levels.

The Lake Association membership has remained strong this year. We are at a very healthy level of members

but can always use your help to remind new people moving in to our area, the many things the Miltona Lake Association does for the lake. Pass the word to join.

We are very excited to report that we have stocked walleye's this fall. We put in 1000 lbs of walleye fingerlings in October. This amounts to approximately 25,000 -30,000 fingerlings. Fingerling's average 4-7" in length, so decent sized fish to get a good start on the fishery. So, please remember that as you receive your dues letters, donating to the fish stocking fund goes directly into fish that go into our lake. We are

convinced that to continue good fishing, we need to restock regularly.

Lake Miltona had some not such good news late last summer, with a green algae growth that showed up. We had it tested and it came back as blue/green algae, which is not healthy. We are in the process of working with the state and county on best practices for communicating what to do if it returns. More to follow on this for sure.

Keep warm this winter and see you on this ice.

Steve DeSutter
President
Lake Miltona Association

2025 Independence Day Parade Winners

A plaque with the winner's names is located at Leaf Valley Mercantile. The awards were as follows:

Pontoon 1st Place - Kyle Tengesdal
2nd Place - Dave Bischoff
3rd Place - Jason Dow

Jet Ski

1st Place - Zoe Scheiber
2nd Place - Ava Scheiber

Boats

1st Place - Rod Jasmer
2nd Place - Team Hodoff

Due to declining attendance, with participation being very poor this year (only 13), Directors made a motion to suspend the parade indefinitely.

Paid Memberships

Membership trend over the past eight years:

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
421	458	467	457	471	475	487	488

2023	2024	2025
412	398	469

Membership in the Lake Miltona Association is encouraged for those in the lake community as well as the general public.

A membership application is available on our website lake-miltona.org or contact us at 790 East Sandy Beach Drive NE Miltona, MN 56354

Lake Miltona Association is a volunteer not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to water quality and ecological balance. DONATIONS AND DUES ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. See IRS Publication 526.

Annual Meeting 2026

**Saturday, June 6th, 2026
9:00am**

Miltona Community Center

Our annual meeting will be held Saturday, June 6th, 2026 at the Miltona Community Center. We will update you in the Spring newsletter as to which topics and speakers that will be attending.

Annual Fundraiser Success

Thanks to all who were able to attend the annual Lake Miltona Association fundraiser. Special thanks to everyone who participated in the planning, arranging, and working the day or evening of the event. The fundraiser continues to be a chance to see old friends and meet the growing number of property owners around the lake. The evening did not disappoint. With Donny Henning calling the raffle, there were many around the room paying close attention to his winning calls. Once again, the fundraiser was held at the Leaf Valley Hall and catered by the Clarissa Ballroom.

The financial success of the event is pivotal to carrying out the mission of the association and once again this year we achieved success. A comparison report of 2024 and 2025 results has been included in this article.

The primary source of our finances are the annual membership dues. The dues and contributions to our fish stocking, and invasive species fund are critical to the Association's ability to address the needs of the lake and keep adding to our walleye population. This year we recorded 469 members compared to 398 in the prior year.

	2025	2024	Increase/ (Decrease)
<i>Dinner Ticket Sales</i>	409	383	26
Dinner Ticket Revenue	\$ 8,170	\$ 7,650	520
Raffle Ticket Revenue	\$ 3,666	\$ 3,639	27
Half -- Hog Raffle	\$ 740	\$ -	740
Guided Walleye Raffle	\$ 595	\$ 720	(125)
50/50 Raffle	\$ 609	\$ 615	(6)
Liquor Raffle	\$ 500	\$ 672	(172)
Donations w/tickets	\$ 200	\$ -	200
Donations Other	\$ 250	\$ 200	50
Auctions/Other Raffles	\$ -	\$ 250	(250)
Beer Donations	\$ 710	\$ 817	(107)
Total Revenue	\$ 15,440	\$ 14,563	877

Catering	\$ (5,113)	\$ (4,748)	\$ (365)
LV Merc	\$ -	\$ (323)	\$ 323
Other Expenses	\$ (2,117)	\$ (1,050)	\$ (1,067)
Total Expense	\$ (7,230)	\$ (6,121)	\$ (1,109)
Net	\$ 8,210	\$ 8,442	\$ (232)

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Algae Water Quality Update

This past September, Lake Miliona experienced a large algae outbreak, referred to as a bloom, at multiple sites across the lake. A sample was collected and Douglas County Soil & Water confirmed it to be toxic blue-green algae. This is concerning because toxic blue-green algae, also known as cyanobacteria, can cause health problems for humans and animals through contact, inhalation, or ingestion.

In response, the Miliona Lake Association Board initiated a Water Quality work group to assess and address this issue. Utilizing a data driven approach, the work group has met with Douglas County Land & Resource Management and Douglas County Soil & Water to understand the factors that contribute to algae growth, identify root cause(s), and recommend appropriate mitigation.

Factors that contribute to the creation of blue-green algae include excess nutrient load (ie. Phosphorus and Nitrogen), warm temperatures, sunlight and warm water. Given this, the Water Quality workgroup has divided contributing factors into two groups, controllable (ie. use of fertilizer, septic systems) and uncontrollable (ie. impact from zebra mussels, weather/warm temperatures). The controllable factors were then sub-divided into near shore and watershed.

Because there are factors that we cannot control, it makes the factors that we can control much more important. Our greatest challenge as lakeshore property owners will be to acknowledge that we need to change our behavior today, to lessen the nutrient load going into the lake in order to improve the water quality.

The photos in this newsletter are actual photos of the bloom that occurred in September and represent how extensive the bloom was. Photos are from the NW and SE shoreline.

Information in the Q&A section below was extracted from the MN Pollution Control Agency, University of Minnesota Extension office and general online search.

What are blue-green algae?

- Though often referred to as algae, blue-green algae are not algae at all, but types of bacteria called cyanobacteria. They are normally present in bodies of water and common in Minnesota. This type of bacteria thrives in warm, nutrient-rich water. When conditions are right, the blue-green algae can grow quickly forming "blooms." Certain varieties of blue-green algae can produce toxins that are linked to illness in humans and animals.

Key contributing factors:

- Excess nutrients: Abundant nitrogen and phosphorus, often from residential and agricultural runoff, act as food for algae, leading to rapid growth.
- Warm temperatures: Blooms are most common in warm spring and summer months when water temperatures are higher, though they can occur year-round if conditions are right.
- Sunlight: Blue-green algae use sunlight for photosynthesis, so plentiful sunlight promotes their growth.
- Calm water: Still or slow-moving water allows the algae to float to the surface and form thick, visible scums or mats. Heavy rainfall can sometimes break up blooms by mixing the water but can also contribute to blooms by washing more nutrients into the water.
- Nutrient sources: Common sources of excess nutrients include

- Fertilizer runoff from lawns and agricultural fields
- Leaking septic systems
- Animal waste
- Discharge from water and food processing plants

Preventing blue-green algae blooms

- Reduce nutrient runoff into the lake; avoid using fertilizer on lawns and use phosphate-free detergents.
- Maintain natural shorelines and vegetated buffers along the lake.
- Ensure septic systems are functioning correctly to prevent leaks.

What do blue-green algal blooms look like?

- Blue-green algal blooms are often described as looking like pea soup or spilled green paint. However, blooms aren't always large and dense and can sometimes cover small portions of the lake with little visible algae present. Blooms can also produce a swampy odor when the cells break down.

What are harmful algal blooms?

- Blue-green algae blooms are harmful when they produce toxins that can make humans and animals sick. Most blooms are not harmful. You can't tell by looking at a bloom if it is harmful or not.

Where are harmful algal blooms found?

- Harmful algae can be found everywhere in Minnesota, but thrive in warm, shallow, nutrient-rich lakes. They will often be found on the downwind side of a lake or in a secluded bay or shoreline.
- While Lake Miliona has a large surface area, fifty percent of its depth is 10 feet or less and considered shallow.

When do harmful algal blooms occur?

- Blue-green algae prefer warm, calm sunny weather and water temperatures higher than 75 degrees F. Blooms usually occur during summer and early fall but can occur at other times of the year if conditions are right.

What are the possible health effects?

- You can become sick if you swallow, have skin contact with, or breathe in airborne water droplets while swimming, boating, waterskiing, tubing, bathing, or showering in water that has harmful algae or if you drink water that contains algal toxins. If you become sick, you might experience vomiting, diarrhea, rash, eye irritation, cough, sore throat, and headache. Symptoms generally begin hours to two days after exposure.

Levels of risk

- The activities that put you in contact with the water, and the amount of time you spend on them, will affect your exposure to algae toxins. Children will generally be more affected than adults.

What should I do if I see a bloom?

- WHEN IN DOUBT, STAY OUT!
- The safest thing to do is to treat every algal bloom as if it could be dangerous.
- Do not swim, boat, water ski or jet ski through algal blooms.
- Do not fish where algal scum is present. **(Cont'd Next)**

Algae Water Quality Update (Con't)

- Do not allow pets to drink lake water during an algal bloom.

As the Board and Water Quality work group continue to address the algae issue, programs or targeted opportunities to improve water quality may be initiated. Through stewardship and by working together, we can improve the water quality of Lake Miltona and pass this wonderful resource that we love to future generations.

Blue Algae Water Pictures



Blue Algae Water Pictures



Fundraiser Donor List 2025

2 Hats plus
4 Ice Fishing Poles
4 Rounds of Golf @ Wadena
68 Veterans Winery
Alex Country Club
Alexandria Movie Theater
American Heritage Hunting Club
Aqua Marine
Boomerang Sports
Borch's Sporting Goods
Bullet Lawn Care
Carlos Creek Winery/22 Northern
Casey's Amusement Park
Chet's Lakeside Inn
Christopherson Bait and Tackle
Dick's Standard/Gappa Oil
Don Henning Excavating
Eldens
First Western Bank
Fishing Trip w/ Christopherson Bait
Fortwengler Electric
Gate City Bank
Geneva Golf Course
Great Hunan
GreyStone Golf
Hardwood Hills Golf Course
Henry's Foods Meat Package
Herby's Bar & Grill
Hilltop Lumber
Jim & Judy's
Juettner Motors

Fundraiser Donor List 2025 (Con't)

Kim Kettler-Realty One
Klinder Meats
L&O Plumbing & Heating
Lake Country Meats
Lake Miltona Golf
Leaf Valley Mercantile
Living Tree Message
LJ's
Lure Lake Bar
Miltona Auto
Miltona Blacksmith
Miltona Greenhouse
Miltona Liquor
Napa Auto, Parkers Prairie
Ollie's Service
Parker's Laundromat
Paul's Small Engine
Pine Ridge Golf
Prairie Archery
Qdoba
Rays Sport
Ron's Warehouse
Rose City Bar & Grill
Rue Salon
Sammy's Onestop
Scherer Printing
Spruce Center Bait
Tastefully Simple
The Old Mill
Todd Whitting-Century 21
Utility Bill Payment
Wendy Vankirk Edina Realty
(cash/can koozies)

Thank You to these
Merchants who provided
over **\$3000.00** in prizes to
our 2025 fundraiser.
Please support them!

Lake Steward Program

Become a Lake Steward on Lake Miltona!!

Douglas County Lakes Association has launched a Lake Steward Program and is in need of volunteers and participants. Vanishing natural shorelines contribute to degraded lake quality. Each shoreline owner can take steps to reduce nutrient runoff and implement conservation actions. It can be done through partial restorations, rain gardens, lakescaping, and in ways that have eye-catching appeal. Consider planting native shore plants within existing rip-rap. Consider other bank and shore erosion control other than rip-rap. Lakeshores weren't meant to have suburban lawns mowed to the water's edge. Help maintain Lake Miltona as a lake designated as **"Exceptional Use"**

The Lake Steward Program was established by Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates. The Lake Steward program empowers homeowners to evaluate their practices and take incremental steps to protect our waterways for generations to come. Through this neighbor to neighbor initiative, we're fostering commitment and pride in the natural beauty of shorelines that absorb runoff, stabilize soil and provide essential habitat for Minnesota's treasured wildlife.

Partner up with some neighbors. Volunteer to be an evaluator on Lake Miltona. Let's be a beacon for the lakes of Douglas County and show others why we are an "Exceptional Use" lake!

Explore the specifics of the Lake Steward

Program here:

<https://mnlakesandrivers.org/lake-steward/>

Jay Sieling
DCLA President
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Wake Safe Map

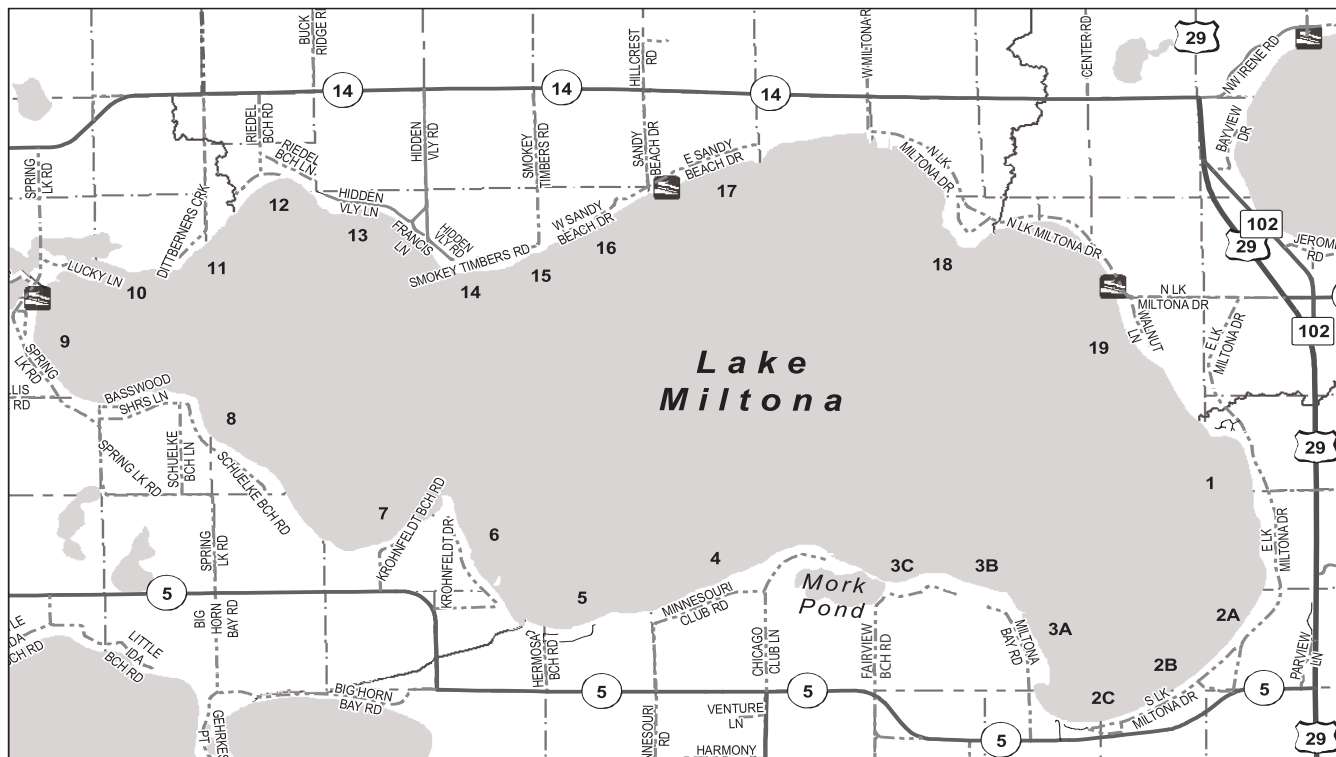
Lake Miltona Association has purchased a Wake Safe Map. This map shows the delineation of the lake to show areas that are 500 feet from shore and 20 feet or greater in depth. These are the recommended "safe" areas to operate wake boats in "surfing mode" according to research from the Saint Anthony Falls Laboratory Boat report published last summer.

Additionally, all power boats should be aware of the impact on the lake bed. Operate in planing or cruising mode in 10 feet of water or deeper. When operating in shallow areas (10 feet deep or less) the recommendation is to go as slow as possible - no wake speed, to minimize the magnitude of bow and stern pressure waves.

All boats have the potential to damage aquatic vegetation. The depth recommendations provided are relative to the lake bed but could also be interpreted as relative to the top of submerged vegetation. Since vegetation grows throughout the open-water season, this is a more difficult recommendation to specify. In general, boats should avoid areas of the lake with aquatic vegetation to minimize damage.

For more information about the Healthy Waters Initiative and the research that led to these recommendations follow this

link: <https://sites.google.com/umn.edu/healthywatersinitiative/phase-ii-research?authuser=0>



2025 Fundraiser

The Association thanks all who attended the fundraiser. A great buffet was provided by Clarissa Ballroom in Clarrisa, MN Catering. Prizes were donated by area merchants, worth over \$3000.00. (See Donation Page). Without the financial and human support of our members and friends, the Association would

be unable to carry out its mission. We are especially grateful for all attendees and the great show of support leading up to and during the fundraiser.

We look forward to the excitement of the August 8th, 2026 fundraiser.

Lake Miltona Ice-on, Ice-off for the past 20 Years.



ICE ON

Dec 13, 2004
Nov 30, 2005
Dec 1, 2006
Nov 29, 2007
Nov 27, 2008
Dec 5, 2009
Nov 27, 2010
Dec 5, 2011
Dec 8, 2012
Nov 26, 2013
Nov 25, 2014
Dec 19, 2015
Dec 10, 2016
Dec 8, 2017
Nov 13, 2018
Dec 3, 2019
Nov 30, 2020
Dec 7, 2021
Dec 1, 2022
Jan 4, 2024*
Dec 4, 2025

ICE OUT

Apr 14, 2005
Apr 10, 2006
Apr 20, 2007
May 4, 2008
Apr 23, 2009
Apr 1, 2010
Apr 26, 2011
Mar 25, 2012
May 14, 2013
Apr 27, 2014
Apr 12, 2015
Mar 31, 2016
May 6, 2017
May 6, 2018
April 24, 2019
April 20, 2020
April 6, 2021
May 4, 2022
May 5, 2023
Mar 24, 2024

Dittberners Creek Culvert

An article in our 2025 Spring Lake Miliona Association Newsletter provided an update to a project proposal to replace the current Dittberner Creek's with a 12-foot by 7-foot reinforced concrete box culvert. This replacement would: (1) reduce the erosion of the downstream bank that deposits unwanted silt downstream and (2) improve fish passage through the culvert by reducing the water velocity exiting the current culvert and thus providing additional spawning habitat for walleye and other Lake Miliona fish. The Spring Newsletter article also reported the good news that a Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) grant proposal of \$307,412 for upgrading the Dittberners Creek culvert in this manner was awarded to the Douglas County Soil and Water Conservation (SWCD).

During the application for this grant the Lake Miliona Association (LMA) Board of Directors sent a letter of support for it to the DNR. Subsequently our Board of Directors has reserved eighty percent of the 10% matching funds needed for this project. Additional matching funds will be required as the project moves forward. The work on this project was projected to begin in late summer or early fall.

The final plan for obtaining the bids for this project has been completed but unfortunately several road blocks have arisen so construction work has not yet begun. First, some changes in the final plan need to be approved by the DNR and the Leaf Valley Township, one of these is that the "culvert" turned out to meet the classification of a "bridge" and another is what to do with the existing culvert. These issues need to be resolved before the plan can be submitted for bids. The high water earlier this fall was another issue, but that has since resolved itself, but now winter is soon approaching. These factors lead us to the conclusion that the actual construction will not begin until spring 2026.

Lake Miliona Walleye Stocking Report

We received a permit to stock 1000 pounds of walleye fingerlings from the Minnesota DNR in October.

We witnessed the weighing of the fish and witnessed putting them into the lake in late October and early November.

With the fish length of approximately 4-8 inch fingerlings, we put in around 15-25 fingerlings per pound. The Walleyes were slightly larger than last year, so bigger fish mean better survival, but lower quantity. So, we think we achieved a great mix of good size and good quantity.

So, the total amount of fingerlings put in was about 20,000-25,000.

With the DNR limited in stocking due to budgets, we want to continue our supplemental stocking of Lake Miliona to ensure fish are being put in annually on a consistent basis.

Please consider donating extra money with your dues to our fish stocking account. We need the membership to financially support the stocking with your donations, or we will not be able to sustain increased levels. Fishing has definitely improved over the past few years, and we are convinced that our stocking makes a big difference in the quality of fishing in Lake Miliona. We are seeing many sizes of Walleye's being caught, so this shows us that our continued, year after year, stocking levels has helped ensure that we have a healthy fishery.

Fish stocking donations go 100% into purchasing walleye fingerlings.

Thank you for your support.



LAKE MILTONA

ASSOCIATION

790 East Sandy Beach Drive NE
Miltona, MN 56354



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TWIN CITIES, MN

Lake Miltona News

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2026 Calendar of Events

January 10	Directors Meeting	9:00 am
April 11	Directors Meeting	9:00 am
June 6	Annual Meeting	9:00 am
July 11	Directors Meeting	9:00 am
August 8	Annual Fundraiser	5-10:00 pm
October 10	Directors Meeting	9:00 am